

THE BORDERGUARDS OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR.MEANS:

In this chapter I will discuss certain preventive measures carried into effect by the Borderguards as well as the means, which made guarding of the borders more likely to be successful by making the approach to and the crossing of the borders more difficult of achievement.

Measures designed to keep order in territories adjacent to the border.

These measures effected civilian and military personnel alike and regulated and limited the activities of the people. These measures defined who may or may not approach the border, to what extent ( 15km., -s 500m-s 50m-s) and with what vehicle.

During the years 1950-51 individuals and families who have shown their antipathy toward the communist regime were removed from border-areas, while the remaining population was closely watched and spied upon ( see: Borderguard Forces: Reconnoitre Section).

One of the effective ways of reaching the border was with the aid of the local farmers. To put an end to privately owned and cultivated farms 15 km-s from the border, Government owned farms and so called T.S.-s or Producer's Co-operatives were formed. One measure made effective in 1950 specified that those who preferred to cultivate their own land could do so provided they gave up the farm-land on the border and exchanged it for land already in government possession away from the border. In this way one of the effective ways of reaching the border was blocked.

The population in the vicinity of the border was forbidden to leave settled areas after dark, or to use vehicles to approach the border without permission to do so from the authorities.

The restricted border areas were:

Until spring 1956 areas adjacent to the Yugoslav border. After this time, only the western border areas, that is the territories adjacent to the Austro-Hungarian border were subject to the above restrictions.

In areas 15km-s from the border only such persons were allowed to stay who had upon their person a permit from the Police Force of the Interior Ministry, allowing them to temporarily stay in the border zone or to enter the zone once or more than once. Only persons who lived in the 15km-s wide border-zone had permanent zone permits. Such a permit was stamped upon the eight' page of the person's identification booklet, and signed by the authorized representative of the Ministry of Interior. This may be described as follows: On the left hand side page there was a large arabic number two, showing that the owner of said identification booklet had permission to stay in the 15 km wide border zone. The stamp used for the authorization of such permit shown the county, the political district, the town or village, the date of the issuance of said permit and finally the readable signature of the one who issued it. The bearer of this permit was not allowed to go as close as 500m-s to the border in the territory of the County mentioned in the permit. The permit was subject to withdrawal. For the purposes of temporary work that needed to be done along the border within the 500m wide strip the Commanding Officer of the Borderguard-Outpost concerned, could give temporary entrance permit.

Seldom was there a private residence to be found inside this 500 m wide strip, in some cases though there were whole settled areas directly adjacent to the border. Persons who had in their possession entrance permits into the 500 m zone had to report in at the Outpost C.O. twice daily ( in the morning and in the evening) who carefully scrutinized their papers and identity, and then notified the guards on duty by telephone ordering them to expect and carefully watch the person or group. With a 500 m zone permit the person was allowed to go as close as 50 m to the border. It was customary to make such permit effective for one or two days only. When a permanent entrance permit was issued for the 500 m zone, it too was stamped into the personal identification booklet of the bearer, with the difference that in the left hand side page instead of the arabic numeral two an arabic numeral one was to be found. Only border-guards on patrol duty were allowed to enter the 50 m wide zone this side the border. Being found here was considered as attempted border-violation and was punishable

by Courts. Guards were ordered to arrest and take in to the Outpost whomever they would find here. If within one of these border zones both military ~~personnel~~ and civilians had to show identification papers to the guards.

Permit was necessary to go to border waters such as Lake Ferto, for the purposes of fishing or cutting reed. These permits were either for "Border-water fishing" or "Border-water reed cutting". Both could be issued by the Outpost Commander if recommended by the Town-Council. The permit was valid for a whole season. In cases of abuse or misuse the permit was withdrawn and the deed regarded as punishable offence. From time to time (two or three times in a year) hunters could obtain entrance permits into the 500 m zone for the purposes of hunting. One or two of the guards were assigned to such groups for accompaniment. At any other occasion civilian or military personnel could remain in the 500 m zone only for the purposes of doing some needed work if accompanied by a borderguard.

Without special entrance-permits the following persons had the right to stay in the 15 km wide border-zone, or had the right to approach the border:

1. The president and members of the Cabinet Council.
2. The Secretary or the members of the Party's Central Directorate.
3. Ministers.
4. The particular District's representative to the Parliament.
5. At certain specified places those who had visas. Persons ~~whohad~~ visas in their possession could remain for the minimum length of time in the border zone, they were not allowed to stop over or stay there.

In any case however even the above mentioned had to identify themselves to the guards on patrol duty.

Borderguard personnel if away from the station of their own unit also needed permit or leave-order authori-

The building of technical barriers was started in 1948 along the Yugoslav border and continued in 1949 along the Austro-hungarian border. These barriers were to serve a moral as well as a military objective. The first was aimed at the moral intimidation of those who contemplated border-violation the second was to hinder physically those who actually attempted to cross them.

The reenforced technical barriers consisted of two, that is three sections. In the first row were the technical barriers, in the second the various mine-fields, in the third the barrier wire-system.

The technical barriers were placed two to three meters this side the border. In two rows pine poles (150-160 cm above ground) were placed opposite one another 250 cm distance between them and barbed wire stretched upon them in such a way as to make it very difficult to go across it, and in any case very time consuming. Every pole was held in place and supported by two other poles, one placed two meters to the right the other two meters to the left of the row at 90 degree angle to the row of poles and barbed wire lines. Five rows of barbed wire were stretched on each row of poles.

Parallel with this barrier on a twenty meters wide strip of land tread-mines and trip mines were scattered. At critical points where border-violations were more frequent than elsewhere (example: Hegyeshalom) the technical barrier was further reenforced; on the twelve meter wide stretch of land parallel to the mine-field trip-wire colonies were placed, that is trip-wire mines. In other words besides the double rows of barbed wire barrier and the mine field where the mines exploded when stepped or stumbled upon an additional trip wire mine system was placed to make the crossing over even more insurmountable.

#### Track-zone

In order to determine the place, the time and the direction of the (attempted or successful) bordercrossing along the mine-fields a 10 m wide track zone was to be found. The ground in this zone was cultivated and kept in such crumbling condition that would make clear track-determination possible.

zation certificate in order to be allowed to stay in a border-zone area. Soldiers could stay within the 15 km wide border zone with permit or leave authorization certificate for the particular area.

It was the duty of every citizen inside the 15 km border zone to keep the enforced "Order along the Border". The enforcement of this was the duty of the Borderguard-units. In order to maintain this order the Borderguards performed the following procedure:

(a) they inspected the drivers and passengers on vehicles that travelled on roads that lay inland from the border, in order to make sure of their identity.

(b) Borderguards inspected passengers of trains (checked their papers) that travelled toward or parallel the border. ( Example: Hegyeshalom-Szombathely route and back Győr-Sopron route and back etc.,)

(c) They inspected the identification papers of the persons who worked on fields either government or privately owned, which lay outside the 500 m zone but close to the border.

(d) Reconnoitre units kept account of the activities of everyone who resided inside the border-zones. ( see: B. Force: Battalion District and Reconnoitre Sections and their work)

In the enforcement of the order along the border it was the duty of the Borderguard personnel to stay clear of violations in the course of identification paper examination or abuse of any kind.

#### Reinforced technical barriers:

Until the summer of 1956 technical barriers were used along the border to make border-guarding easier. During the summer of 1956 most of these barriers were taken up. All such barriers would have been removed however the events of October 1956 in Hungary put an end to this intention. The Communist dictatorship now once more feels the need of Hungary's enforced isolation from the western nations.

Following track evaluation 24 hours after a border-violation the tracks were erased on the track-zone. Where the terrain was flat machines were used to keep the track-zone in proper condition, while on hilly or marshy terrain man-power was employed. Only Outpost Commanders had the right to put foot on the track-zone, if they had a good enough reason for so doing.

#### Elevated watch and guard-towers:

With the help of elevated towers the border was sealed off and made almost hole-proof. By using the elevated guard-towers a single borderguard on patrol duty could take care of a 600-800 m long border section. At the request of the District - the Battalion - or the Outpost-Commander, the Borderguard Engineering Division built the elevated towers at specified places.

In general these towers were 10 meters high above ground ( from 6 to 12 m-s ) The towers were built upon pine-wood poles, were equiped with port-holes and look-out windows. The borderguard on patrol duty was able to watch and fire at the same time. The ladder leading up to the tower was camouflaged and the changing of guards was thus not obvious. Every tower was equipped with a telephone and a map sketch to aid the guard in keeping himself properly oriented. By means of the telephone he could contact the Outpost Commander and through him the Battalion and/or the District Commander, or Headquarters. He could read off the map in the tower the exact location of the particular tower in relation to the other towers, and relative to the Outpost. From here the guard was to keep under observation the elevated and more significant points of the enemy(!) territory, the other side the border, so that if necessary he may give accurate description of it to the Outpost C.O. The exact distance from the tower of points that were to be kept under observation from here was given on the map sketch. ( Example: The railroad station on the Austrian side is northward 500 m-s from the watch tower. The Austrian Police-Force Barracks are 1500 m-s northeastward from the watchtower.)

The borderguard was ordered to approach and leave the elevated towers concealed and under cover.

Telephones along the border:

In order to orient and guide the borderguards on duty the Outpost established reference-points in each border section. Near every reference-point ( 5-10 m-s from it) a hidden telephone apparatus was placed. When the reference point was one of the elevated towers, then of course the telephone was in the tower. In other cases the telephone apparatus was built in a 30 cm high concrete block, in such a way that when the door of it or the cover was opened by the patrol ( by means of a key and a special "pipe-key") three electric plug opening became visible. The three plug openings were placed so as to form a ninety degree angle. The guard on patrol-duty carried a telephone receiver. If he plugged in his receiver in horizontal direction he got connected with the guard on duty at the Outpost, whereas if he plugged in his receiver in a vertical direction he could be called by the guard-on duty at the Outpost, at any time with a buzzing sound. The Outpost C.O. gave orders and instructed specifically every guard on duty by way of telephone. These phones were most important though when on alarm or when border incidents occurred.

Signal-apparatus:

The signal apparatus in use by the guards were:

1. Flare signals,
2. Noise-signals
3. Halasi-type electric signals.

With the use of these signaling devices one guard could patrol as large a section of the border at night as he could during daytime. the signal-apparatus<sup>2</sup> would indicate when a person or persons

were approaching the border, it would show where such persons were located, in what direction ~~they were~~ did they go, and would possibly show how many they were. The most frequently used were the flare-signals. The flare-colors indicated the direction in which the border violators were traveling, where they were at present and how many they were. The flare-fire-ing apparatus' were fastened to 50 cm high pine -piles. Two such apparatus' were fastened together with ~~thin~~ wire upon in such a way that contact with the wire, the wire itself popped out the safety-spigot which in turn then would cause the flare apparatus to fire up the signal. In the light of the flare the guard could see where and how many the border-violators were. In order to determine the direction ~~toward which~~ the border-violators were travelling the flare-signal apparatus were placed in three rows and the flare-color of each row was different. For example; the row closest to the border was red the one in the middle white and the one on this side yellow. If the border violation wanted to go out of the contry the order of flare colors would be the reverse of <sup>signals</sup> the color sequence were he <sup>in case he</sup> to attempt coming in.

These signals were either placed for the whole season of summer or winter, in which case the Outpost C.O. ordered the Outpost' guard in charge of flare-signals to place them in position, specified, or in many cases the guard on duty would place them along the 300-600m border section in his charge, at dusk and take them up at dawn. The flare-signal apparatus were continuous and camouflaged and even in the day~~time~~ difficult to spot. In most cases if the guard on duty placed the flare-signals he would place only one row of it and take up the row at ~~the end of~~ dawn or whenever <sup>on</sup> his duty time ended.

It should be mentioned here that the guards used flare-pistols to light up the terrain when necessary and in the absene of telefones as communication signals. If for some reason the guard on duty could not establish contact with the Outpost via telephone he then would use flare-signals previously agree upon, to convey his message. For exmple: 3 red flare signals - unpunished border violation occurred. 2 red and 1 yellow - border-violator was captured, - 3 yellow s - additional guards are needed. 2 yellow 1 red - unpunished border-violaton toward out of the country occurred 4 red armed provocation.



~~Noise signal apparatus~~ <sup>mechanisms</sup> devices

Where flare signals could cause fire (near wheat field or in woody areas) noise signal mechanisms were used. These mechanisms were generally made by the Outpost <sup>pers.</sup> and placed in position by them. Very simple operation it was. Empty cans were smudged then filled with gravel and tied to thin but strong wire. The wire was stretched 3 to 4 feet high <sup>from the ground</sup> from tree to tree in woody areas, across every path ~~breakin~~ and road to obstruct traffic. The cans were smudged so that they may not be shiny and obvious in sun light and in moon-lit nights. Such noise-signal devices were used by the following Outposts: Muck, Hermes, (in the Sopron woody areas) ~~Koszeg~~, in the Koszeg Irottka mountain area Keresztuti, Hetforrad and Stayerhazai Outposts. These outpost used flare-signals too in every case. These noise-making devices were not changed or replaced by new ones as long as they proved useful.

Halasi-type electric signals:

When previously warned to anticipate border-violation at a certain place on the border the Halasi-type electric signaling apparatus was used that is placed there overnight. The guard on duty usually held the apparatus in hand or in front of him in order to notice the signal immediately. The apparatus consisted of two electric bulbs mounted in a box that was the frame of the electric field and of two contact wires one to the right the other to the left. In the given place the guard would stretch the two contact wires 20-30 cm-s above the ground, one to his left the other to his right. Then if the wire was contacted or jerked by anyone, on either side the bulb on the side in question would lite up. This device was used mostly <sup>only</sup> in exceptional cases.

Track and guard-dogs:

Track and ~~guard~~ dogs were used to make border violation even more difficult, and to chase the violator after the attempt. In the Districts on the ~~Austro-hungarian~~ border each Outpost had two guard-dogs with two dog-leaders, every battalion headquarters owned two track-dogs and had two trackdog leaders and every District Hdqtrs. owned 3-5 track and guard dogs and were assigned their trainers. It was the duty of the trainers and their

dogs to (in some cases) discover border violators

to track them down and capture them. The trainers were trained at the Dunakeszi-Alagi Trainer-School. ( see Borderguard: Strength, Hdqtr Here they raised and trained the German Shepard puppies. The track-dogs were trained exclusively for tracking. They were capable of tracing and tracking down the violator, and when it came to capture they helped the guard by hindering the violator in his ability to fight. The guard dogs too were taught to follow up tracks however their training was concentrated more on spotting and chasing. Every Outpost had guard-dogs.

Every guard who performed border-patrol duty, every dog trainer and his dog had to go yearly for a two month training period to the Dunakeszi-Alagi Training School, and was obliged to participate in daily practice exercises. ( tracking and struggle with the violator Every dog-trainer assigned to the Outpost performed 6 hours of border-patrol duty with his dog daily.

#### Border-patrol horses

Every Borderguard unit had horses at its disposal. They were used for border-patrol and transportation purposes. These horses were trained at the Kiskunhalasi <sup>Equary</sup> ~~Trainer~~-Training School.